



JACKIE CONTRERAS, Ph.D.  
Acting Director

**County of Los Angeles  
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES**

425 Shatto Place, Los Angeles, California 90020  
(213) 351-5602

July 13, 2011

To: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor  
Supervisor Gloria Molina  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky  
Supervisor Don Knabe

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From: Jackie Contreras, Ph.D.  
Acting Director

**CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE GROUP HOME PROGRAM CONTRACT  
COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW**

In accordance with your Board's April 14, 2009 motion, we are informing your Board of the results of a group home compliance review.

Children Are Our Future is located in Los Angeles County in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Supervisorial District and provides services to Los Angeles County Probation Department youth and Department of Children and Family Services' (DCFS) foster youth. According to the agency's program statement, its stated goal is "the achievement of significant improvements in the emotional health and well being of each resident." Children Are Our Future is licensed to serve a capacity of 54 children, ages 13 through 17.

The Out-of-Home Care Management Division (OHCMD) conducted a review of Children Are Our Future in September 2009 at which time the agency had nine six-bed sites and one DCFS male, age 15, placed in its care. This child had been placed with the agency for three months. For the purpose of this review, he was interviewed and his case file was reviewed. This child was prescribed psychotropic medication so we reviewed his case file to assess timeliness of psychotropic medication authorizations and to confirm that medication logs documented correct dosages were being administered as prescribed. In addition, five staff files were reviewed for compliance with Title 22 regulations and contract requirements.

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As Children Are Our Future serves both Probation and DCFS youth, the Probation Department conducted the 2010 monitoring review of the agency and will submit a full report of noted findings. DCFS participated in the Probation Department's March 29, 2011 exit conference with Children Are Our Future. At that time, findings noted in the DCFS 2009 review and resultant Corrective Action Plan (CAP) (See attached) were addressed. During this exit conference, we reviewed the status of our 2009 review findings in the following sections: Facility and Environment, Program Services, and Children's Health-Related Services, including Psychotropic Medication.

**SCOPE OF REVIEW**

The purpose of this review was to assess Children Are Our Future's compliance with the contract and State regulations. The visit included a review of the agency's program statement, administrative internal policies and procedures, the placed child's file and a random sampling of personnel files. A visit was made to all nine sites to assess the quality of care and supervision provided to children, and we conducted an interview with the one DCFS-placed child to assess the care and services he was receiving.

A copy of this report has been sent to the Auditor-Controller (A-C) and Community Care Licensing (CCL).

**SUMMARY**

Generally, the agency was providing good care to the DCFS-placed child, and the services were provided as outlined in the agency's program statement. The child stated he was doing fine at Children Are Our Future and that he liked the general environment of the Group Home. He also stated that he liked the other residents at the Group Home.

The direct care staff stated they were satisfied with the support they received from the administrative staff and found the regular in-service training sessions to be very useful.

At the time of the review, Children Are Our Future needed to complete all the required elements in accordance with the Needs and Services Plan (NSP) template so that future NSPs would be comprehensive. The agency also needed to maintain timely psychotropic medication authorization forms and address a few physical plant deficiencies, none of which posed a safety hazard to placed children.

Children Are Our Future was receptive to reviewing its monitoring procedures concerning submission of psychotropic medication authorization and to implementing some systemic changes to improve its compliance with regulations and the Foster Care Agreement.

**NOTABLE FINDINGS**

The following are the notable findings of our review:

- Some non-hazardous deficiencies were observed and needed repair.

During our March 2011 follow-up review, Children Are Our Future had not properly maintained the backyard of the Saticoy House. The Probation review noted additional physical plant deficiencies at each of the sites in the agency. These deficiencies were cosmetic and presented no child safety concerns.

- The one NSP reviewed was not comprehensive in that it did not contain the grade point average.

During our March 2011 follow-up review, Children Are Our Future was developing and maintaining comprehensive NSPs for the DCFS placed child.

- The placed child's psychotropic medication authorization was not submitted by the psychiatrist in a timely manner. This process was not properly monitored by the agency staff. Although this responsibility falls on the prescribing psychiatrist, Children Are Our Future failed to follow up with the prescribing psychiatrist to ensure timely submission to obtain a current psychotropic medication authorization. This issue was immediately brought to the provider's attention, and the Executive Director stated he would immediately inform his staff that all future psychotropic medication authorizations submitted by the prescribing psychiatrist were to be carefully monitored for timely submission.

During our March 2011 follow-up review, Children Are Our Future was appropriately monitoring psychotropic medication authorization forms for timely submission for approval.

The detailed report of our findings is attached.

**EXIT CONFERENCE**

The following are highlights from the DCFS exit conference held on October 23, 2009 and DCFS' follow-up of the Children Are Our Future's 2009 Corrective Action Plan (CAP), during the Probation Department's 2010 annual review exit conference held on March 29, 2011.

**In attendance:**

In attendance at the DCFS 2009 annual review exit conference held on October 23, 2009 were Michael Liguata, Executive Director, Children Are Our Future; and Linda Reusser, Monitor, DCFS OHCMD.

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In attendance at the Probation Department 2010 annual review exit conference held on March 29, 2011 were Anthony Liguata, Program Director, Sandra Harris, Assistant to the Director, Children Are Our Future; Joe Ninofranco, Monitor, Probation Department; and Donald Luther, Monitor, DCFS OHCMD.

**Highlights:**

The Executive Director was in agreement with our findings and recommendations. He stated that he would make every effort to adhere to completing the required elements of the NSP template.

Concerning the failure to submit the psychotropic medication authorization form for approval, the Executive Director stated that the treating psychiatrist reported that he would submit the authorization to the Juvenile Dependency Court Medication Support Division; however, he had not. The Monitor spoke to the treating psychiatrist who reported that he planned to submit the authorization, but the child's former foster mother told him that she had the right to authorize medication use and he allowed this to be the last word on the matter. Although this responsibility falls on the prescribing psychiatrist, Children Are Our Future failed to follow up with the prescribing psychiatrist to ensure timely submission to obtain a current psychotropic medication authorization. The Executive Director stated that he would immediately inform his staff that they were to monitor submission of all future psychotropic medication authorizations. He also agreed to repair physical plant deficiencies at the Group Home sites as quickly as possible.

As agreed, Children Are Our Future provided a timely written CAP addressing each recommendation noted in this compliance report. The approved CAP is attached. As noted in the monitoring protocol, a follow-up visit will be conducted to address the provider's approved CAP and assess for full implementation of recommendations.

If you have any questions, please call me or your staff may contact Aldo Marin, Board Relations Manager, at (213) 351-5530.

JC:RS:KR  
EAH:BB:lr

**Attachments**

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer  
Wendy Watanabe, Auditor-Controller  
Donald H. Blevins, Chief Probation Officer  
Public Information Office  
Audit Committee  
Sybil Brand Commission  
Michael Liguata, Executive Director, Children Are Our Future  
Jean Chen, Regional Manager, Community Care Licensing

# CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW - SUMMARY

9110 Independence Ave.

Chatsworth, CA. 91311

License #s 197600743, 197606393, 197605633, 197606680, 197602059, 197600298,  
197605332, 197601442, 191222605

Rate Classification Level: 12

	<b>Contract Compliance Monitoring Review</b>	<b>Findings: November 2009</b>
I	<b><u>Licensure/Contract Requirements</u></b> (9 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Timely Notification for Child's Relocation</li> <li>2. Stabilization to Prevent Removal of Child</li> <li>3. Transportation</li> <li>4. SIRs</li> <li>5. Compliance with Licensed Capacity</li> <li>6. Disaster Drills Conducted</li> <li>7. Disaster Drill Logs Maintenance</li> <li>8. Runaway Procedures</li> <li>9. Allowance Logs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Full Compliance</li> <li>2. N/A</li> <li>3. Full Compliance</li> <li>4. Full Compliance</li> <li>5. Full Compliance</li> <li>6. Full Compliance</li> <li>7. Full Compliance</li> <li>8. Full Compliance</li> <li>9. Full Compliance</li> </ol>
II	<b><u>Facility and Environment</u></b> (6 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Exterior Well Maintained</li> <li>2. Common Areas Maintained</li> <li>3. Children's Bedrooms/Interior Maintained</li> <li>4. Sufficient Recreational Equipment</li> <li>5. Sufficient Educational Resources</li> <li>6. Adequate Perishable and Non Perishable Food</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Needs Improvement</li> <li>2. Needs Improvement</li> <li>3. Full Compliance</li> <li>4. Full Compliance</li> <li>5. Full Compliance</li> <li>6. Full Compliance</li> </ol>
III	<b><u>Program Services</u></b> (8 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Child Population Consistent with Program Statement</li> <li>2. DCFS CSW Authorization to Implement NSPs</li> <li>3. Children's Participation in the Development of NSPs</li> <li>4. NSPs Implemented and Discussed with Staff</li> <li>5. Therapeutic Services Received</li> <li>6. Recommended Assessments/Evaluations Implemented</li> <li>7. DCFS CSWs Monthly Contacts Documented</li> <li>8. Comprehensive NSPs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. N/A</li> <li>2. N/A</li> <li>3. N/A</li> <li>4. N/A</li> <li>5. N/A</li> <li>6. N/A</li> <li>7. N/A</li> <li>8. Needs Improvement</li> </ol>

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VIII	<b><u>Children's Clothing and Allowance</u></b> (8 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. \$50 Clothing Allowance</li> <li>2. Adequate Quantity of Clothing Inventory</li> <li>3. Adequate Quality of Clothing Inventory</li> <li>4. Involvement in Selection of Clothing</li> <li>5. Provision of Personal Care Items</li> <li>6. Minimum Monetary Allowances</li> <li>7. Management of Allowance</li> <li>8. Encouragement and Assistance with Life Book</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (ALL)
IX	<b><u>Personnel Records (including Staff Qualifications, Staffing Ratios, Criminal Clearances and Training)</u></b> (12 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Education/Experience Requirement</li> <li>2. Criminal Fingerprint Cards Timely Submitted</li> <li>3. CACIs Timely Submitted</li> <li>4. Signed Criminal Background Statement Timely</li> <li>5. Employee Health Screening Timely</li> <li>6. Valid Driver's License</li> <li>7. Signed Copies of GH Policies and Procedures</li> <li>8. Initial Training Documentation</li> <li>9. CPR Training Documentation</li> <li>10. First Aid Training Documentation</li> <li>11. Ongoing Training Documentation</li> <li>12. Emergency Intervention Training Documentation</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (ALL)

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IV	<b><u>Educational and Emancipation Services</u></b> (4 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emancipation/Vocational Programs Provided</li> <li>2. ILP Emancipation Planning</li> <li>3. Current IEPs Maintained</li> <li>4. Current Report Cards Maintained</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Full Compliance</li> <li>2. Full Compliance</li> <li>3. N/A</li> <li>4. Full Compliance</li> </ol>
V	<b><u>Recreation and Activities</u></b> (3 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participation in Recreational Activity Planning</li> <li>2. Participation in Recreational Activities</li> <li>3. Participation in Extra-Curricular, Enrichment and Social Activities</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (All)
VI	<b><u>Children's Health-Related Services (including Psychotropic Medications)</u></b> (9 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Current Court Authorization for Administration of Psychotropic Medication</li> <li>2. Current Psychiatric Evaluation Review</li> <li>3. Medication Logs</li> <li>4. Initial Medical Exams Conducted</li> <li>5. Initial Medical Exams Timely</li> <li>6. Follow-up Medical Exams Timely</li> <li>7. Initial Dental Exams Conducted</li> <li>8. Initial Dental Exams Timely</li> <li>9. Follow-Up Dental Exams Timely</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Needs Improvement</li> <li>2. Full Compliance</li> <li>3. Full Compliance</li> <li>4. Full Compliance</li> <li>5. Full Compliance</li> <li>6. Full Compliance</li> <li>7. N/A</li> <li>8. Full Compliance</li> <li>9. N/A</li> </ol>
VII	<b><u>Personal Rights</u></b> (11 Elements) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children Informed of Group Home's Policies and Procedures</li> <li>2. Children Feel Safe</li> <li>3. Satisfaction with Meals and Snacks</li> <li>4. Staff Treatment of Children with Respect and Dignity</li> <li>5. Appropriate Rewards and Discipline System</li> <li>6. Children Free to Receive or Reject Voluntary Medical, Dental and Psychiatric Care</li> <li>7. Children Allowed Private Visits, Calls and Correspondence</li> <li>8. Children Free to Attend Religious Services/Activities</li> <li>9. Reasonable Chores</li> <li>10. Children Informed about Psychotropic Medication</li> <li>11. Children Aware of Right to Refuse Psychotropic Medication</li> </ol>	Full Compliance (ALL)



**CHILDREN ARE OUR FUTURE GROUP HOME PROGRAM  
CONTRACT COMPLIANCE MONITORING REVIEW**

**Children Are Our Future  
Administrative Office  
9110 Independence Ave.  
Chatsworth, CA. 91311  
Rate Classification Level: 12**

**SITE LOCATIONS**

Chatsworth House  
10928 Remmett Avenue  
Chatsworth, CA. 91311  
Phone number: 818-709-3808  
License # 197600743

Constance House  
10033 Shoup Avenue  
Chatsworth, CA. 91311  
Phone number: 818-709-3808  
License # 197606393

Harvey House  
19600 Superior Street  
Northridge, CA. 91324  
Phone number: 818-709-3808  
License # 197605633

Howard House  
20463 Mayall Street  
Northridge, CA. 91324  
Phone number: 818-709-3808  
License # 197606680

Kezios House  
20440 Keswick Street  
Canoga Park, CA. 91306  
Phone number: 818-709-3808  
License # 197602059

Legg House  
19110 Merion Drive  
Northridge, CA. 91326  
Phone number: 818-363-7154  
License # 197600298

Saticoy House  
17622 Lemarsh Street  
Granada Hills, CA. 91344  
Phone number: 818-709-3808  
License # 197605332

Terry House  
19646 Ballinger Street  
Northridge, CA. 91344  
Phone number: 818-709-4439  
License # 197601442

West Hills House  
8569 Faust Avenue  
West Hills, CA. 91304  
Phone number: 818-709-3808  
License # 191222605

The following report is based on a "point in time" monitoring visit and addresses findings noted during the September 2009 monitoring review. During March, 2011, we also conducted a follow-up review of the agency to determine the status of our prior findings.

**CONTRACTUAL COMPLIANCE**

Based on our review of one child's case file and five staff files, Children Are Our Future was in full compliance with six of nine sections of our Contract Compliance review: Licensure/Contract Requirements, Educational and Emancipation Services, Recreation and



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Activities, Personal Rights, Children's Clothing and Allowance, and Personnel Records. The following report details the three review sections found to be out of compliance.

#### **FACILITY AND ENVIRONMENT**

Based on our review of Children Are Our Future and an interview with the one DCFS-placed child, the agency fully complied with four of six elements in the area of Facility and Environment. Generally, the nine Group Home sites provided a home-like environment and their exteriors were well-maintained. The front yards were clean and well maintained and eight of the sites were adequately landscaped. At the Saticoy House, the backyard was not landscaped and the swimming pool had numerous large cracks. In addition, the backsplash behind the stove at the Kezios Group Home site needed repair.

The Group Homes maintained age-appropriate and accessible recreational equipment and on-site educational resources. They also maintained sufficient supplies of perishable and non-perishable foods.

The Auditor-Controller's (A-C) prior year review also noted that Children Are Our Future had not always ensured that the Group Home sites were maintained in accordance with CDSS Title 22 regulations.

#### **Recommendation:**

Children Are Our Future will ensure that:

1. All Group Homes sites are maintained and in good repair in accordance with Title 22 regulations.

During our March 2011 follow-up review, Children Are Our Future had not properly maintained the backyard of the Saticoy House. The Probation review noted additional physical plant deficiencies at each of the sites in the agency. These deficiencies were cosmetic and presented no child safety concerns.

#### **PROGRAM SERVICES**

Based on our review of one child's file, Children Are Our Future complied with seven of eight elements in the area of Program Services. One Needs and Services Plan (NSP) was not comprehensive in that it did not include the child's grade point average.

#### **Recommendation:**

Children Are Our Future management will assure that:

2. NSPs contain all required elements, including children's grade point averages.

During our March 2011 follow-up review, Children Are Our Future was developing and maintaining comprehensive NSPs.

**CHILDREN'S HEALTH-RELATED SERVICES, INCLUDING PSYCHOTROPIC MEDICATION**

Based on our review of the placed child's case file and interview, Children Are Our Future fully complied with eight of nine elements in the area of Children's Health-Related Services, including Psychotropic Medication.

The child was being seen routinely by the prescribing psychiatrist, and there was a psychotropic medication form in the child's file; however the form had not been submitted by the treating psychiatrist to the Court to obtain the necessary authorization. The Monitor spoke to the treating psychiatrist who reported that he planned to submit the authorization, but the child's former foster mother told him that she had the right to authorize medication use. He allowed this to be the last word on the matter, and no authorization form was submitted to the Juvenile Dependency Court Medication Support Division for approval. Although this responsibility falls on the prescribing psychiatrist, Children Are Our Future failed to follow up with the prescribing psychiatrist to ensure timely submission to obtain a current psychotropic medication authorization.

**Recommendation:**

Children Are Our Future management shall ensure that:

3. All psychotropic medication authorization forms are monitored for timely submission for approval.

During our March 2011 follow-up review, Children Are Our Future was appropriately monitoring psychotropic medication authorization forms for timely submission for approval.

**PRIOR YEAR FOLLOW-UP FROM THE AUDITOR-CONTROLLER'S (A-C) REPORT**

**Objective**

Determine the status of the recommendations reported in the A-C's prior monitoring review.

**Verification**

We verified whether the outstanding recommendations from the monitoring review listed in the May 6, 2009 report were implemented.

**Review Results**

The A-C's prior monitoring report contained 13 outstanding recommendations. Specifically, Children Are Our Future was to repair and replace items throughout the facilities; provide children with the required minimum weekly allowance; adequately secure items that pose a potential safety hazard; develop comprehensive NSPs that include measureable and attainable goals; maintain court authorizations for all children prescribed psychotropic medication; provide children with a sufficient quantity of clothing; allow age-appropriate

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children the opportunity to participate in emancipation and vocational programs; allow children the opportunity to participate in the planning of activities; maintain medication logs with accurate and updated information; provide adequate personal care items; ensure that current Individualized Education Plans are maintained; provide children the opportunity to select their own clothing; and provide activities that are of interest to the children.

Based on our follow-up of these recommendations, Children Are Our Future fully implemented all but three recommendations: maintaining Group Home sites in good repair, developing comprehensive NSPs, and monitoring psychotropic medication authorization forms for timely submission. Corrective action was requested of the agency to further address these findings.

**Recommendation:**

Children Are Our Future management shall ensure that:

4. It fully implements the three outstanding recommendations from the A-C's Report issued May 6, 2009, which are noted in this report as Recommendations 1, 2 and 3.

During our follow-up review in March 2011, Children Are Our Future implemented Recommendations 2 and 3; however, the agency had not fully implemented Recommendation 1 in the area of Facility and Environment.



January 8, 2010

Barbara Butler, Group Home Mgr.  
DCFS-OHCMD  
9320 Telstar Avenue #206  
ElMonte, CA 91731

Dear Ms. Butler:

Following please find our response to the Preliminary Performance Evaluation Results for the Monitoring review which began September 1, 2009.

**Needs and Services Plan**

The Case Manager is responsible to gather and oversee all information with regard to their assigned residents' case. The Case Manager will contact the County Worker within 24 hrs. of Placement with contact information.

**PMAs:**

Children Are Our Future will ensure that all residents that come in to agency under the care of a Psychiatrist obtain and process a PMA for that resident in a timely fashion and transition that resident to the CAOF Psychiatrist as soon as possible to better ensure the continuity of care.

**Site Deficiencies**

Work on all sites was completed on or before 9-29-09 with the exception of the following.

**Kezios Site:** [REDACTED] was completed 12-22-09

**Saticoy Site:**

The grass in the backyard is an ongoing project. Reseeding attempts were not completely successful due to the large tree that impairs the growth of the grass. Swimming Pool is ongoing. Owner in process of refinishing and repairing pool. As of 1-7-10 pool repair is approximately 1/2 completed.

Please note that a preliminary, hand written, CAP was submitted to Ms. Reusser via her assistant Queenie and subsequently emailed to Ms. Reusser on 11-10-09. CAOF understands that this CAP was not in an acceptable format and has corrected the format.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the above, please contact me at the number listed below.

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Michael B. Linquata  
Executive Director

9110 INDEPENDENCE AVE • CHATSWORTH, CA 91311  
(818) 709-3808 • (818) 709-3906

A Non-Profit-Non Sectarian Residential and Educational Group Home Network